

SerpentStar Alban Arthuan

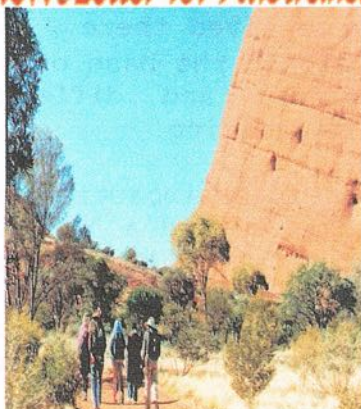
NewsLetter for Australian & New Zealand Members of O.B.O.D. Vol 4. no 3 June. 2001

ULURU

The 5th Australian OBOD Assembly

ALBAN ARTHUAN

- by Raelene, Kerri & Tracey.

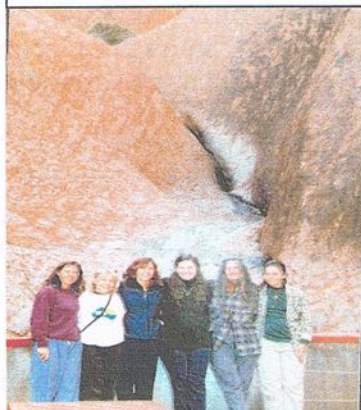


Walking around Uluru

First, some background information on Central Australia, where stands Uluru and Kata Tjuta:

"Uluru (Ayer's Rock) and Kata Tjuta (The Olgas) haven't always dominated a flat dessert. Through the ages the climate was at times wet and 'tropical'. Whole mountain ranges came and went.

Much of Central Australia lay under water until around 600 million years ago, when the sea floor was thrust up to form a greater mountain range in the south-west.

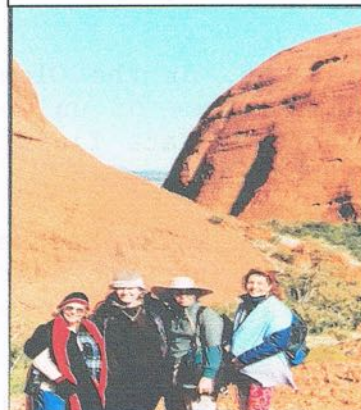


L-R: Kerri, Raelene, Tracey
Heather, Vivienne, Tiki
at Uluru

North flowing rivers slowly carved into this mountain range, dropping the heavier eroded rock first, near the mountains, and carrying lighter sands further out towards the east.

It was this eroded debris which eventually solidified to form the common base material for Uluru and Kata Tjuta. Earth movements later tilted these rocks so that their original horizontal layers are now at a slight angle in Kata Tjuta and almost vertical at Uluru.

So that flat Central Australia of today is the result of millions of years of erosion, with only the harder rocks surviving above the surface."



Raelene, Heather, Tiki,
Kerri at the Olgas

Uluru, the largest monolith in the world is 348 metres above the surrounding plain. It is 4 km long, 2.4km wide and 9kms around the base.

We arrived at Uluru for our Winter Soltice celebration, which also coincided with a full lunar eclipse and World Peace Day.

We met as six individual people, from seemingly different walks of life. Certainly from different Sates - Heather from Victoria, Vivian from South Australia, Tiki from Western Australia and Raelene, Kerri and Tracey from Queensland.

Some of us had never met before.

As the days progressed, and feelings and thoughts were shared, especially on our walk around Uluru, we began to feel a bond developing between us. So much to learn from each other.

We woke early the next morning. It was so cold, and Tiki led us to a beautiful lookout at the camp site, where we watched the spectacular sunrise over Uluru in the South and Kata Tjuta in the West.

Our walk around Uluru started with a guided cultural tour, giving us some background on the Aborigines who once lived there. We then proceeded along the further $7\frac{1}{2}$ kms, around the base of the rock, each section presenting very distinct and different energies, keenly felt by us all - it was truly amazing!

Some energies at the sacred sites were incredibly impactful and emotionally charged. One section in particular, around a "women's sacred site" envisaged feelings of screaming women from times long gone, when they were invaded by rival tribes. The impact of their cries were still felt today. As we walk on, these impressions, however, were soon replaced by feelings of peace and serenity. Scenes of lush foliage came to view around the corner.

The challenge of finding the 'right place' for the Alban Arthuan Ceremony was foremost in our minds. During our walk around Uluru, the question was put to the spirits. A negative reply was clearly felt to the opening up of our ceremony in this area.

Wednesday night was special in that we all contributed a part of ourselves - music, song, food and fellowship. The beauty of Vivian's song with Irish Gaelic was a special memory to the night. It was then decided that the best place for our ceremony was at the Campsite Lookout, where Uluru to the south and Ka Tjuta to the west, could both be clearly seen.

Thursday dawned, another clear and beautiful, but cold morning. To-day we were visiting Kata Tjuta some 42 kms west of Uluru. There are a couple of different walks to take. We took the Valley of the Winds walk, which is 1.6kms, rather precarious underfoot, and taking some two hours there and back.

It was bitterly cold and windy there. Kata Tjuta, or the Olgas, had a completely different feel to it. Whereas some of us felt peaceful at Uluru more comfortable there - here at Kata Tjuta we felt drained of energy, and feelings of irritability.

Only three of the group managed to complete this walk, Heather, Tracey and Tiki. When they returned they were radiant with energy and Tracey, in particular described experiencing the feeling of walking into another dimension.

It was here that Vivian got talking to a young Israeli couple, visiting Australia. She told them about our ceremony to be held that night, and invited them to join us. They seemed very keen.



Kerri felt that Uluru had Yin energies and Kata Tjuta had Yang energies, and these two huge rock formations sit in the Center of Australia to balance our earth.

Thursday evening - the night of our Ceremony. It was again cold, but a beautiful clear evening as we made our way to our chosen place, for our Alban Arthuan Ceremony. Many people were there watching the sunset, and it's effects on Uluru and KaTjuka. We marvelled at the stillness and starkness of the coming eclipse.

When the sun eventually disappeared, people slowly began to drift away, leaving us in solitude and anticipation of our ceremony. Our young Israeli friends were already there, eager to participate with us.

Suddenly we saw in the East, the brightest star, Venus, beaming a welcoming - never so bright as in the now dark sky above. A wonderful omen, which made our hearts sing, as we connected with the universe.

It was time to begin! The circle was cast by Heather. We began our entry, and commenced our ceremony. Each played out their role, using torches and candles to see. Vivian's playing of her flute was hauntingly beautiful. It was very touching, especially during the Eisteddfod, when our Israeli friends gave thanks for our prayer for Peace. They have known nothing but war in their country, all their lives.

Each member of OBOD'S, who had previously attended an Assembly was remembered, and a short ritual was conducted, whereby each person added a few grains of earth to an urn, containing a selection of soil from each of the places where previous Assemblies had been held.

Each one of us contributed to the Eisteddfod, and our ceremony was concluded on a peaceful note. Afterwards we all enjoyed our meal, which Heather had prepared beforehand. During our meal, we learnt more about our Israeli friends, who are seriously looking for another country to make their home.

The next morning came the parting of the ways. Vivian back to South Australia, Heather to Melbourne and Tiki to Western Australia.

Raelene, Kerri and Tracey were continuing on for a couple of days, taking in a visit to Kings Canyon, which proved to be spectacular. We all felt a camaraderie, as we hugged each other farewell - till we meet again!

So many shared memories, so many shared experiences, so much shared simplicities, yet powerful energies, to be remembered forever.



Correspondences for the Blue Mountains New South Wales Australia.

Sunset Garden Grove

Sunset Garden Grove is a private grove in the Blue Mountains of N.S.W. just west of Sydney. It is approximately 15m back from a cliff edge, & faces west The grove is approximately 1050m above sea level.

This is a small insight into the grove as the year turns. I hope it will convey to those living elsewhere an idea of this place as I walk around it, & of the local associations I have given the festivals. This is how it is when the festivals are celebrated in this small part of the world.

October November December will be covered in the next issue.

Bright Blessings ,Kathy

July



Time of snow. The Earth & Life on it has slowed right down, but there is an urgency just below the surface - energy waiting to explode

Weather Days - 3-8oC
Nights -2 - -3
Frost, ice, some snow settles
Clear & Cold

Flowering
Violets, pansy, heather, japonica, zygocactus, hebe, daphne, gorse, wattle, calendula, feverfew, banksias.

Vege Garden
Beetroot, turnips, shallots, rosehips

The Mistletoe has turned brown , Pine cones are beginning to form.

Wildlife

Kookaburras
Wattlebirds
Bees
Bronzings are courting.



August Imbolc.

First or new moon, Earth Festival
The quickening

Weather.
Noticeably warmer
Days 7 - 12oC
Nights 2 - 8oC
occasional frost& ice

Herb ginger
Flower, violet
Tree blackthorn (prunus spinosa)
Stone, shell
Colour, white.

Flowering
Violet, pansy, pieris, daphne, camellia, wattle, heather, viburnum, azalea, rhododendron, magnolia, daffodils, jonquils, gumnuts.

Vege. Garden
Beetroot, onions, shallots, snowpeas.

, Food.
Oat cake,
Drink, mead
Incense, violet oil
Animal, bee.

Alban Eiler September 21st

Time of wattle, time of frogs
Solar Festival
Balance from youth & Joyfulness
Sunrise
Direction East

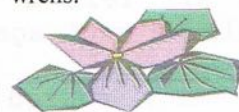
Weather
Days 9 - 14oC
Nights 2- 7oC
Mists

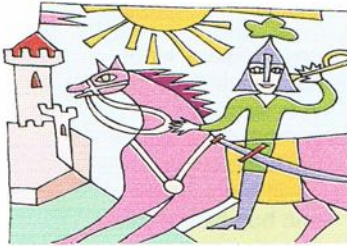
Flowering violet, kerria, all bulbs, calendula, tagetes, diosima, magnolia, azalea, rhododendron, lavender, rosemary, daphne, viburnum, leaves on deciduous trees, comfrey is shooting.

Herb calendula
Flower , flannel flower (actinotus helianthi)
Tree , bottle brush (callistemon)
Stone citrine
Colour, yellow
Incense, citrus oil

Animal Platypus
Food, honey cake,
Drink, wine
Direction East
Element, Air

Wildlife
Gnats, rosellas, snails, parrots, spiders, kookaburras, snakes, wattlebirds, flies, treecreepers, ants, magpies bees, wrens.





NOTICEBOARD

Hello Everyone!

It's pretty odd being up in the Northern Hemisphere I can tell you!

With more cars, more rain, more people and so on you don't feel as free as down-under, but there are positive sides to the experience.

One is being able to gather in vast hordes more easily. So we've had great gatherings at Glastonbury and Stonehenge (some photos are on the OBOD website - see What's New section) and the Summer Camp has just finished and was a huge success.

A sample evening: looking out from above the head of the White Horse of Uffington with the sun setting over the rolling English landscape below, with Ronald Hutton giving a stirring account of its history and us all chanting Awens to the setting sun!

I sat in the hot tub with my son Lawrence later that night watching shooting stars, while a small group undertook a Druid sweat house ceremony and others clustered around camp fires, songs drifting through the night...

Blessings of the Northern Lights and the Summer Sun to all Aussie & Kiwi Obodies!
Philip /\

Hi everyone,

I thought I would start of my new job as Australian Grove Coordinator by telling you about the grove near where I live.

I had been living here for about ten years before I discovered this grove.

There is a small private church on a property about fifteen minutes drive from here that was built in the 1800's. Next to the church is a circle of seven oak trees with an eighth in the middle. There is a depression in the ground where the ninth tree once stood in the circle.

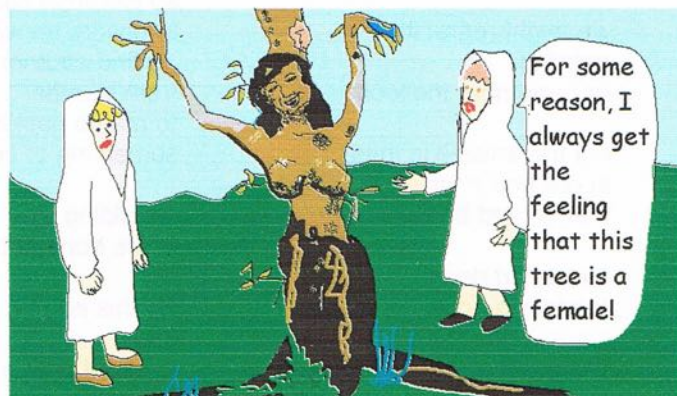
The trees are all fairly old, but I have not been able to find out what was there first, the trees or the church.

Both the church and the trees are sited on a triangle of land in the middle of three roads. There are avenues of trees on each road leading up to the church.

Being on a property, it is very quite. It is wonderful to just stand under the trees and listen to the wind!

With magic,

Sionnach
To record information about your grove please contact Ngarie at



cartoon by Vyvyan

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Or
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or
phone (0412)529435.

Bards Corner

Ceridwen, Woman of Earth by Vivienne Manouge.

Ceridwen Cerianwen, I see you,
a strong, tough, hard woman nearing forty,
plain of face, hot tempered,
a woman of earth,
like me.

You were ambitious for your son,
ugly as he was,
hatchet faced, ginger-headed, rough-handed,
perhaps,
like you.

You worked with your herbs,
you were advanced in magic,
you studied, you advanced, you brewed
for your own son
three

careful

drops.

love all beings	love all truth	love all
virtue		
reverently	passionately	
valiantly		
and do	and tell	
and say		
no harm	no lie	
no ill		
to any	to any	
of any		

Ceridwen,
your jealous passion
for your child's birthright!

How you flung yourself
through forms,
enraged, dismayed,
grief-stricken, crying out
in your birds' voices,
and your beasts' voices,
and your fishes' voices
And your plants' voices.

Sobbing,
exhausted
with the seed in your beak -
what victory is this?

Doped, duped and defeated
you were,
by the warm charm
of new womb-life.

Mother of two sons,
my love goes out to you,
piteous mother of anyone,
of everyone,
for the sake of your ugly son,
for whom you were ambitious,
whose birthright you
could not defend...

and for the sake of
the beautiful usurper,
your second son,
in the light of whose
radiant brow you are
bewildered, I think,
and humbled a little,
like me.

ends



Somewhere there is
a weave
a tapestry

It may be delight
or
just as easily
destruction

It comes together and is
pulled apart

just as easily

and it brings forth form
and it comes to be
formless

it is a moment
and an omen's
notice

it is part of the seed
and the seed's disgrace

it moves in and out
and grows underneath

it rarely appears
until we least expect it

and then it is there
suddenly so

we might regret its
passing
or remember the loom

but the swerve is there
in cell and stem
branch and bone

foretelling doom
foretelling hope

each one and the
other
each sister and brother

it is up to us what we
make of it

up to us to make it home

but in those moments
when life blasts apart
and death rushes in
so too hope can begin
to rework the weave
to find another waking
from slumber
to march past in formation
something of celebration

rebuilding sky
in the hope of the eye.

So this is what it might
mean
to stand on the brink of a
dream

Keith



*Kirsty from New Zealand has sent us this
beautiful ceremony of the Winter Solstice*

ALBAN ARTHAN – WINTER SOLSTICE DAWN CEREMONY

South, East, West and North outside room. South enters, lights candles and addresses assembled company:

Alternatively all come together in a circle and sit peacefully until it feels right to begin

INTRODUCTION

South: By the power of star and stone,
By the power of the land within and without,
By all that is Fair and Free,
We welcome you to this rite of the dawn of the Winter Solstice in the Grove we have made here together.

East, West and North enter

West: We - all of us - come together from East and West, North and South to be here today - now, together.
We stand strong here.

East: O Goddess, O Spirits of the Land, and of the People, and of this special place, we greet you and honour you, as we come together in this circle to celebrate this time of the Winter Solstice: Alban Arthan in the Druid tradition, Hikumutu in the Maori tradition.

South: Let us mark out this circle - our sacred space - with symbols of the season. (sprinkle water around the circle, and leaves in circle sunwise around participants while E says:

East: The circle of our horizon - of our lives and lands, of time and of the year, of seasons and of goodness, of birth and of growing, of dying and of rebirth.

West: And now, within this circle we stand. Within this small circle that by magic has become the larger circle of our world, let us fill this realm with the power and the energy and the beauty of our love.

All hold hands and chant nine Cascading Awens

North: And may there be peace in every quarter:

South: (turning to face outwards and raising right palm) May there be peace in the South.

North: (as above) May there be peace in the North.

East: (as above) May there be peace in the East. (All four then turn inwards)

All: May there be peace throughout the whole world.

North: May our realm be blessed by power of sun and moon! (One person takes candle around circle sunwise, while another sprinkles water around circle, counter-sunwise)

South: May our lands be blessed by Matariki - Little Eyes - the stars of the Pleiades, and by Puanga - the bright star Rigel, and by Takurua, the dog-star Sirius. And by Centaurus who stands closest to the sun and is bright in our sky. He who stands in the skies to guide us home according to the Greeks.

OPENING



West: And may the four directions be honoured that power and radiance might enter our circle for the good of all beings.

North: (turning to face outwards and raising right palm) With the blessings of the great Pohutakawa tree that stands in the North, and the inner fire of the sun, we call upon the powers of the North.

West: (as above) With the blessing of the salmon of wisdom who dwells within the sacred waters of the pool, we call upon the powers of the West.

South: (as above) With the blessings of the vast realm of Antarctica, and of the starry heavens and the deep and fruitful earth, we call upon the powers of the South.

East: (as above) With the blessing of the hawk of dawn soaring in the clear pure air, we call upon the powers of the East. (Pause, all then turn inwards)

South: May the harmony of our circle and of our lands be complete.

THE WORKING

North: As we sit here on this wonderful dawn, we pause to reflect on the year behind us and on the year yet to unfold.

East: We stand still as the earth this morn, and recall the promise of the sun to slowly return to our earth, bringing forth the seeds in the earth, and in our hearts.

South: We think of ourselves as the seed again in the earth being nurtured and nourished by the wonderful, deep, dark magic of the land and the stone.

West: We let go of the things we don't need, and rely upon the resources we have built up over the seasons.

North: And we look inside to heal that which is hurt and to rely again on the resources that we have built and stored over this time.

Sit and think of that which can be left to the earth, and feel the loving healing qualities of the earth and sky.

North: We allow ourselves to celebrate the time of death and rebirth knowing that the universe unfolds as it should, and that in dancing with the flow we can learn to understand the messages lying there for us, especially those times that are most painful and hard.

East: We trust the earth to nurture us and heal us, and to take from us what we don't need.

South: And we recall this love and allow the earth, the sun, the stars, the crystals in the earth, the stone, the yin and yang of water - to reach into us and heal us, and in this we celebrate this great wonderful cycle and give back our thoughts and energies of love and peace.

West: And we think too of Centaurus up in the sky, the third brightest star in the sky and the closest to the sun. He who taught man to read the sky and stands to direct us home.

North: We look to Centaurus to remind us of the sun which today will slowly return to us as the light increases again across our lands of the long white cloud.

East: And we feel the loving energy of the stars that shine for us, reminding us to look up out of our lives and know there is more than our short time here, and to remember the mysteries, the simplicities, and the love.

Meditate on this and sit in silence, allowing the earth and sky to heal, letting go of a years worries and remembering that we are part of this universe which is unfolding around us.

EISTEDFODD

CLOSING

East: It is the hour of recall. As the fire dies down (here, if there is a fire, extinguish a brand; or extinguish candles, or let the lights be somewhat dimmed) let it be relit in your hearts. May your memories hold what the eye and ear have gained.

(All hold hands in the circle. Pause for attunement, then East leads, all saying: We swear by peace and love to stand, heart to heart etc. three times. Then 3 Awens are chanted.)

South: Let the spirits of the Four Directions be thanked for their blessings.

East: In the name of the hawk of dawn and of the element air, we thank the powers of the East.

South: In the name of the icy realm of Antarctica, and of the element of earth, we thank the powers of the South.

West: In the name of the salmon of wisdom and the element of water we thank the powers of the West.

North: In the name of the great Pohutakawa tree and of the element of fire, we thank the powers of the North.

(Pause. Then the four face into the circle again)

West: May the harmony of our circle and of our lands be complete.

East: I now declare that this Festival of the Winter Solstice in this Grove we have between us created here is closed in the apparent world and in this Circle. May its inspiration continue within our beings.



Centaurus is a large and rich constellation representing a centaur in Greek mythology, reputedly the scholarly centaur Chiron, who was the tutor of many Greek heroes, and who, according to legend invented the main constellations. He was raised to the sky after being accidentally struck by a poisoned arrow from Hercules. The constellation is of particular interest because it contains the closest stars to the Sun, α (alpha) Centauri, a group of three stars linked by gravity. A line from α (alpha) through β (beta) Centauri (the Pointers) points to Crux, the Southern Cross. One of the strongest radio sources in the sky, Centaurus A, lies in the constellation, associated with the galaxy NGC 5128. Centaurus lies in a prominent part of the Milky Way, providing rich star fields and clusters for binoculars. To find Centaurus look towards the south and up about 70° at this time of the year. You should be able to orient yourself by using the Pointers and Crux the Southern Cross, to help find the constellation.



Traditional Medicine Ways **FOUNDATION COURSE** **AIMS**

- To provide a self-reflective program in the healing arts and sciences.
- To give a grounding, understanding and orientation toward the **Traditional Medicine Ways** course.
- To undertake an examination of personal intent of motives in the healing arts and sciences.
- To integrate the above as a self-initiation process into **Traditional Medicine Ways**.

Full details are available on the website: druidry.org/obod/healing/index.html

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